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ALBANIA FIGHTS ILLITERACY, EXPANDS SCHOOLS

SCHOOLHOUSES REBUILT -- Zer i Fopullit, No 285, 26 Nov 49

Before the war, over 80 percent of the Albanian people were illiterate. In many villages there were no schools, and an entire prefecture might have only two or three schools. In the mountains of the north, for example, there were only 16 students in 1939, or one student per thousand of population. Almost all the students, and especially those in institutions of higher education outside Albania, came from privileged families and were destined to serve the interests of the ruling class.

When the Italian Fascists occupied Albania, they introduced curricula and textbooks that were not proper pedagogically, belittled the sciences, smothered learning with Latinity, and imposed Fascist ideology and discipline.

Before the war there were public and private gymnasia (secondary schools), practical science and classical, and 4- and 5-year elementary schools. Each school had a different curriculum; there was no standardization. The schools were subject to US, French, or Italian influence. Each school selected its own subjects. Often it would have to be satisfied with one 15- or 20-page notebook a year, as nobody ever asked to see the records, and control over education was only nominal.

Immediately after the liberation, burned and ruined schoolhouses were rebuilt, a net of schools was set up in the mountain provinces, and the campaign against illiteracy in the Army and among the people was continued. Despite difficult postwar conditions, the number of elementary schools rose from 643 in 1938-39 to 1,097 in 1945-46, and the number of pupils rose from 52,024 to 78,030.

The educational reform of 1946 made it possible for every citizen to go to school and receive an elementary and higher education. It made elementary school compulsory and universal.

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In 1948-49 the number of elementary schools, all of which were 4-year, rose to 1,850. Seven-year education, which was reserved exclusively for large cities before the war, was available in only 11 schools with a total enrollment of 4,619 pupils. During 1948-49 it was available in 146 schools, serving small centers and the more important villages.

The system of middle schools was extended, and particular attention was paid to professional education, which was practically nonexistent in the past. Technical schools supplemented their courses with practical work in factories, workshops, hospitals, farms, etc. Normal schools were formed. Today there are six gymnasias, seven normal schools, and technical schools of several kinds. Other 2-year professional schools are functioning in the main industrial centers.

In 1946 the first 2-year Pedagogical Institute in Albania began to function. It is preparing trained teaching personnel for the 7-year school. It is patterned after the 2-year Pedagogical Institutes of the USSR and has five departments, Albanian language and literature, Russian language and literature, history and geography, mathematics and physics, and biological and chemical sciences.

During the last 5 years, the organization of the schools, curricula, textbooks, and instruction methods have been reformed and reoriented on the basis of pedagogical principles and Soviet experience, and curricula have been standardized.

Since the war the number of pupils in Albanian schools has increased as follows:

	<u>1938-39</u>	<u>1948-49</u>
In elementary schools	52,024	162,732
In 7-year schools	4,619	15,825
In middle schools	1,696	3,259

The present curriculum is better adapted to present-day life than the pre-war curricula were. Education now is based upon the study of the Albanian language and literature, mathematics, sciences, history, and geography, while Latin and Ancient Greek have been eliminated. Russian is taught in the middle schools. All textbooks, from the primers on, are taken over intact from Soviet schools. The texts translated from other languages were purged immediately after the First Congress of the party. With the help of the USSR, Albanian schools are acquiring new books, laboratories, and teaching equipment.

Nursery schools and kindergartens for preschool children have been developed on a much larger scale than before the war, especially to permit mothers to go to work. There were 23 kindergartens with 2,434 children in 1938-39, and 143 with 9,599 children in 1948-49. The children of killed or wounded soldiers and Partisan veterans live in children's homes and are educated at government expense. The children of poor workers and peasants who cannot afford to continue their education are eligible for a government scholarship every year.

In order to develop reserves of highly-trained personnel, the government has sent hundreds of students to various institutions of higher learning in the USSR and people's democracies. Soon Albania will have its own engineers, physicians, agronomists and teachers of science and the humanities.

After the liberation, adult education was instituted for the first time. Elementary, 7-year, and night middle schools are attended by great numbers of blue- and white-collar workers and military personnel. Various courses have been opened in law courts, industrial centers, and cooperatives to train personnel.

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Thousands of students attend the literacy courses, which are given throughout Albania for people between the ages of 12 and 40. Seminars and correspondence courses also have been organized. Since the liberation, the number of elementary schools has tripled.

ALBANIAN LANGUAGE TO GET NEW ORTHOGRAPHY -- Neues Deutschland, No 187,  
12 Aug 49

The Albanian language is to be governed by new orthographic standards. A conference has been called in Tirana to deal with this important question.

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